

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TRIPOL 00523 251450Z

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 DHA-02 PM-04 L-03 NSC-05

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06

PRS-01 SP-02 IO-13 EB-08 COME-00 SIL-01 LAB-04

/080 W

-----251500Z 109065 /53

R 251430Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4286

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, ELAB, LY, EG

SUBJ: LIBYA CONSIDERS TERMINATION EMPLOYMENT OF EGYPTIAN MANPOWER

1. APRIL 24 LOCAL MEDIA QUOTES AUTHORITATIVE GENERAL PEOPLES COMMITTEE SOURCE THAT LIBYA IS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING THE TERMINATION OF THE EMPLOYMENT OF EGYPTIANS BECAUSE OF THE PRESENT DETERIORATION IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE GENERAL PEOPLES COMMITTEE'S SOURCE REPORTEDLY STATED THAT THE MOVE IS BEING CONSIDERED AFTER RECENT STATEMENTS OF THE EGYPTIAN MINISTERS OF INFORMATION AND CULTURE AT THEIR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING IN CAIRO APRIL 17. SOURCE DESCRIBED STATEMENTS AS THREATS, INTER-FERENCE AND DEFAMATION OF LIBYANS.

2. LOCAL MEDIA CONTINUES TO PUBLISH ACCUSATIONS THAT EGYPTIAN AUTHORITIES ARE HOLDING LIBYAN NATIONALS HOSTAGE. MEDIA ATTACKS EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER FAHMI'S
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PAGE 02 TRIPOL 00523 251450Z

STATEMENT THAT LIBYANS ARE ALLOWED TO VISIT EGYPT AND RESIDE THERE WITHOUT PROBLEMS. LIBYAN GOVERNMENT NEWS AGENCY COMMENTARY CLAIMS FAHMI'S STATEMENT IGNORES FACT THAT WHILE LIBYANS MAY BE ALLOWED TO TRAVEL TO EGYPT, THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED TO LEAVE.

3. COMMENT: LIBYA'S ACCUSATION THAT EGYPTIAN AUTHORITIES ARE

RESTRICTING EXIT OF THEIR NATIONALS HAS INCREASINGLY
BECOME FOCUS OF LIBYAN PROPAGANDA ATTACKS AGAINST
SADAT. LIBYAN THREAT TO TERMINATE LOCAL EGYPTIAN
EMPLOYMENT HAS PERIODICALLY BEEN MADE DURING CRISIS
IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. NEVERTHELESS,
THREAT RINGS HOLLOW GIVEN LIBYAN MANPOWER SHORTAGE.
THE MAJORITY OF THE QUARTER OF A MILLION EGYPTIANS
EMPLOYED HERE WOULD, IN ALL PROBABILITY, NOT BE
AFFECTED BY THE ADOPTION OF SUCH A POLICY. TARGET
WOULD PROBABLY BE LIMITED NUMBER OF HIGHLY VISIBLE
AND SKILLED EGYPTIAN PROFESSIONALS. REGARDLESS OF
STATE OF RELATIONS, LIBYANS ARE MAKING A CONCERTED
EFFORT TO REPLACE FOREIGNERS WITH THEIR OWN NATIONALS.
CASE IN POINT IS EGYPTIAN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS WHOM
EGYPTIAN MEDIA CLAIMS ARE BEING MISTREATED BY LOCAL
AUTHORITIES. LIBYAN COUNTER-CLAIM INDICATES THAT AIR
TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS, AS OTHER FOREIGNERS, ARE BEING
REPLACED BY LIBYAN NATIONALS AS THEIR CONTRACTS STIPULATE.
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